DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 306 608 CS 506 582

AUTHOR Williams, David E.
TITLE Identifying the Rhetoric of Uncertainty Reduction.
PUB DATE Apr 89
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Communication Association (Kansas City, MO, April 13-16, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Interpersonal Communication; *Rhetoric; Rhetorical Criticism; Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS Burke (Kenneth); *Rhetorical Strategies; Rhetorical Theory; *Uncertainty Reduction

ABSTRACT

Offering a rhetorical perspective of uncertainty reduction, this paper (1) discusses uncertainty reduction theory and dramatism; (2) identifies rhetorical strategies inherent in C. W. Berger and R. J. Calabrese's theory; (3) extends predicted outcome value to influenced outcome value; and (4) argues that the goal of uncertainty reduction and influenced outcome value can be viewed as Burkean identification. Forty-six references are attached. (SR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED306608

IDENTIFYING THE RHETORIC OF UNCERTAINTY REDUCTION

David E. Williams
School of Interpersonal Communication
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

David E Williams

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CS506582

A paper presented at the Central States Communication Association, Kansas City, April, 1989.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Introduction

Over a decade ago, the role of communication in relational development and the communication field in general was introduced to Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). The theory fulfilled the immediate purpose of adding to the understanding of what happens when people meet for the first time and how that encounter influences the possibility of a continuing relationship. Uncertainty reduction has also attracted considerable attention because it is a communication theory which actually generated in our field. Subsequent research has applied, extended and questioned uncertainty reduction.

Despite numerous applications and extensions, uncertainty reduction has not been viewed from a rhetorical perspective. The closest attempt was provided by Sunnafrank (1986) who developed predicted outcome value. This revision of uncertainty reduction proposes that the goal of an initial encounter is to measure the potential value of further interaction and then act accordingly.

This paper will offer a rhetorical perspective of uncertainty reduction by: 1) discussing uncertainty reduction theory and dramatism; 2) identifying rhetorical strategies inherent in Berger and Calabrese's theory; 3) extending predicted outcome value to influenced outcome value and 4) arguing that the goal of uncertainty reduction and influenced outcome value can be viewed as Burkean' identification.

Uncertainty Reduction Theory and Dramatism

Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) was originally proposed by Berger and Calabrese (1975). This preliminary work provided a theoretical perspective to explain how strangers satisfy their desire to reduce uncertainty, explain and predict behavior of the other. This essay developed seven axioms and 21 theorems to guide the understanding and continued research of uncertainty reduction. This initial work discussed the entry, personal and exit phases of initial interaction and established two components of uncertainty reduction. The proactive component allows the interactant to develop predictions of the other while the retroactive component concerns the explanation of the others' behavior. Proactive and retroactive attribution processes were initially tested by Berger (1975) to determine how early information was used to explain behavior.

A method for measuring uncertainty was developed with a seven-item CLUES instrument (Clatterbuck, 1979). Clatterbuck developed four hypotheses from the axioms of uncertainty reduction theory and attempted to build a foundaton for testing of the construct. The CLUES instrument did not fully support URT but, as the author argued, these findings should not invalidate uncertainty reduction theory, the CLUES instrument or further testing of the theory.

At present, uncertainty reduction research is being viewed from three perspectives. First, scholars are readdressing the original axioms and theorems to determine if the theory is sound. Donzella (1988) and Kellerman (1986), for example produced empirical claims which question the validity of uncertainty reduction theory.

Second, the original theory is being explained and explored in greater detail (Berger, 1979; Berger & Roloff, 1982 and Berger & Bradac, 1982). Berger (1979) addressed how incentives, deviations and the prediction of future interaction will influence communication monitoring behavior and thus, the reduction of uncertainty. Berger also outlined passive, active and interactive strategies for gaining information in initial interactions. Berger & Roloff (1982) addressed the effect anticipation can have on initial interactions.

Third, the theory is being accepted and applied to other areas of communication research. Uncertainty reduction theory has been extended into intercultural research (Gudykunst, 1983, 1985; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986a, 1986b) organizational research (Smircich & Calas, 1987; Lester, 1987; Jablin, 1984, 1987) and instructional communication (Stanton-Spicer & Darling, 1986; Gorham, 1988).

Kenneth Burke and Dramatism

Kenneth Burke is one of the most influential scholars to be adopted by the field of communication. A review of all

theories and concepts introduced by Burke, let alone the interpretations, extensions and applications of other scholars, would carry the writer and reader into numerous areas unrelated to the purpose of this essay. Therefore, this section will center on elements of Burke's writings directly related to the argument that the goal of uncertainty reduction is to reach identification with an interactional partner. These elements of Burke's writings include: 1) conceptions of rhetoric, 2) hierarchy, 3) motivation, and 4) identification.

Conceptualization of Rhetoric

The first element, Burke's conceptualization of rhetoric, is a broad lable. The specific issues for discussion in this section will include: the definition, scope and function of rhetoric.

> Burke's (1955) definition of rhetoric is as follows: "It is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols" (p. 43).

"Symbolic" and "symbols" refer to Burke's view of language and nonverbals as tools used to stand for the object we attempt to communicate about. This is important because Burke (1966) defines man as a symbol using and misusing animal and shows that man invented language, as a symbol

system, to facilitate communication. The goal of rhetoric, as noted in this definition is to "induce cooperation". Inducing cooperation, as opposed to other possible views of rhetoric such as defeating one through argumentation or producing sound rationale and justifications for a position, is important to note. The view of rhetoric as inducing cooperation is critical to understanding persuasion as identification and identification as the goal of uncertainty reduction.

The scope of rhetoric, according to Burke, includes not only all forms of verbal and written communication but nonverbal or "nonsymbolic" conditions as well. Burke (1955) states, "the nonverbal, or nonsymbolic conditions with which both lover and ruler must operate can themselves be viewed as a kind of symbolism having persuasive effects" (p. 161). Burke's examples include the possibility that "military force" can be rhetorical because of the meaning it conveys and its' use in battle. The same analysis can be made of eye contact in an initial encounter. Eye contact, itself, is not rhetorical; however, the meaning behind the eye contact is rhetorical. Sustained eye contact during an initial encounter can produce the meaning of one's interest in the other. Likewise, only momentary eye contact that is abruptly broken off can mean the opposite.

Foss, Trapp and Trapp (1985) describe the function of Burke's rhetoric as that which "helps the rhetor maneuver through life, directs the movements and operations of life,

and provides ways of feeling more at home in the chaos of the modern world" (p. 161). Inherent in this conceptualization of the function of rhetoric is the ability to identify key elements of a situation and strategically deal with them. For example, in an initial interaction between an employer and employee the subordinate may rhetorically choose actions based on an anlaysis of the situation. Although the desire may be to impress the boss with his or her ideas, he or she realizes the superior is busy and does not want to be bothered. Therefore, the employee decides to accept a superficial introduction and save the ideas for a more appropriate time.

The style with which one responds to a situation constitutes another element of the function of rhetoric. Burke (1957) reveals that responses to situations are both strategic and stylized. Style can be viewed as a vocal alteration for emphasis or the effective ordering of a response.

Hierarchy

Hierarchy is the second element of Burke's writing which will help establish the rhetorical use of URT. From the negative in language, people are bound to systems of hierarchies. Hierarchies consist of any system which places an individual or group in a ranked position which indicates a level of status. Ruekert (1982) states

"Any hierarchy is simultaneously unifying and

divisive in so far as it orders the whole by ranking according to some value-system and in so far as the ranking is a division into different classes of being" (p. 131-132).

Any hierarchy one may be in (organizational position, status, education level) force one to participate in the hierarchic motive. They are goaded by the desire to climb the hierarchy as well as the threat of falling. Foss, et. al. (1985) add that some will seek to climb the hierarchy while others are satisfied by being used by someone in a higher position. For example, a student may not desire to be the best student in the class as long as the teacher continues to call on him or her for answers.

The hierarchic motive results in what Burke terms "hierarchic psychosis". Man is inevitably caught in the hierarchical systems of social order and will feel uneasy because of the situation. Although the uneasiness can be temperarily relieved, the predicament can never be eliminated from social interaction. The benefit of hierarchy is that it helps to add order to a chaotic world. However, in doing so, it creates uneasiness in individuals as they manuever into different positions of different hierarchies.

As individuals find their niche in the hierarchy, they develop distinctive modes of living and points of view. Different people will develop different outlooks and views. Burke refers to one's outlook as a terministic screen

because it will screen out viewpoints inconsistent with their worldview. This will result in a "trained incapacity" which inhibits one's ability to communicate with someone operating out of a different terministic screen. The inability to understand someone operating from this different viewpoint results in what Burke (1955) terms "mystery".

Mystery performs two important functions in a hierarchy. First, mystery can encourage obedience and continuation of the hierarchy. Burke (1955) stated:

> "the high development of magic as a persuasion that promotes cooperation in primitive tribes, and the many reversion to 'mystique' in modern policies of right, center, and left, seem to indicate a profounder element here" (p. 179).

When people accept the status of the hierarchy they are buying into the mystery. They do not object to the dictates of authority because they have accepted the mystery of something between them and those of higher standing.

Second, mystery will hide some of the hierarchical differences between people and thus allow for persuasion. In discussing this function of mystery, Burke stated:

> "We note the equivalents of this, either in a 'pastoral' rapport between high and low, or (when the band is snapped) in such 'mystic' hatred as spokesmen for the 'toiling masses' sometimes feel for the very idea of the 'ruling class' or as

spokesmen for the ruling class feel for the leaders of the revolt, or even for reform. So, we look for all the attenuations of mystery. For as students of rhetoric, we concede the great persuasive power of mystery" (p. 278).

Those lower in the hierarchy will not be aware of all that distinguishes them from those above. Therefore, to some degree, people can identify with others at a different level of the hierarchy and be moved to adopt their proposals. A little league baseball player has a different hierarchical position that the National League's most valuable player. However, the child is not aware of all that separates the two (money, work ethic, values etc.) and can identify with his hero. This ignorance allows the child to listen to, and understand, what the player wishes to communicate. The child is then easily persuaded not to take drugs as the player commands during a 30 second public service announcement.

Motivation

The third element of dramatism which is particularily relevent to establishing a rhetorical view of URT is motivation. Motives are methods for creating meaning in the larger context of an individual's worldview or "orientation". Blankenship, Murphy and Rosenwasser (1974) describe motives as machinery "used to comprehend, describe, and define the circumstances and events in which human beings find themselves" (p. 7). Motives are linguistic

constructs which possess two relevant characteristics. First, when we speak of motives we are describing situations and stimuli. If one acts out of fear, motivated by fear, the motivation comes from the specific situation that scared him or her and the desire to committ whatever act they did. Second, motives serve an interpersonal function because once the stimulus situation is determined one is able to predict responses of others (Blankenship, et. al., 1974).

Identification

The final Burkean element to consider in a rhetorical view of URT is identification. Identification is a major addition to the previously understood conception of rhetoric. Identification, or consubstantiality, allows persuasion to take place when two or more people share the same language, mannerisms desires etc. As Burke (1955) stated "A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insorfar as their interests are joined, A is identified with B. Or he may identify himself with B even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes that they are, or is persuaded to believe so" (p. 20).

Two individuals can be thought of as two separate substances. When one finds he or she has things, styles or desires in common with another the two substances have become one in those areas. This phenomenon is refered to as consubstantiality or identification. "Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance

and consubstantial with another" (p. 21). Individuals are alientated in that each person is his or her own entity. If people were all of one substance, as Burke notes (1955) "absolute communication would be of man's very essence" (p. 22). Since this is not the case, rhetors are able to create and claim consubstantiality.

Identification can occure in three ways. First, identification can occure as a means to an end. One can be persuaded if the rhetor convinces him or her that they both desire the same goal or outcome. Second, two can identify against a common enemy. When two friends unite to ostracize a third they have reached identification. Third, identification can occure unconsciously. Foss, et. al. use the example of someone who buys Marlboro cigarettes unconsciously identifying with the Marlboro man in the advertisement.

The previous section has reviewed Kenneth Burke's concepts of rhetoric, hierarchy, motivation and identification. These concepts will be essential in forming the argument that URT can be viewed from a rhetorical perspective. The following section will further this argument by demonstrating four components of URT which can be used for rhetorical or strategic purposes.

Rhetoric of Uncertainty Reduction

A review of URT will demonstrate that it is possible to isolate rhetorical components within the theory. Inherent in this approach is the view that communication is almost

always used for strategic purposes (O'Keefe & Delia, 1982; Weinstein, 1966). Isolating the rhetorical components of URT will show some of its strategic potential. This section will examine four components of URT that can be used as rhetorical strategies. The four elements are: predicting future behavior, similarity reduces uncertainty, social context and information-seeking strategies.

Predicting Future Behavior

The first element of URT which can be used as a rhetorical strategy is the ability to predict future behavior. Berger (1975) described proactive attribution as information gained early in the interaction which may be used to predict attitudes and opinions that have not yet been disclosed by the conversational partner. Berger and Calabrese (1975) further explain that uncertainty reduction can help to narrow the range of alternatives about the other's probable future behavior. Duck's (1977) predictive filtering model demonstrates how individuals gather information about a partner to make their future behavior more predictable.

To extend this premise, an interactant can use these initial insights to align his or her comments with the predicted beliefs of the target. For example, let's assume two people meet for the first time at a political rally. George is in support of the candidate and Mike is an observer. Through the initial interaction, George discovers that Mike owns a small business and is proud of his family

life. George would be able to predict Mike's political views and thus, without revealing his support for the candidate, make comments that would align the candidate with Mike's views. For example, Mike might say, "I've noticed the candidate speaks of his family a lot". George, without revealing his hidden agenda, to gather support for his candidate, has used uncertainty reduction as a device to help influence his target.

Similarity Reduces Uncertainty

The second rhetorical component of URT is similarity. Berger and Calabrese (1975) further suggest that similarities play an initial role in uncertainty reduction but they did not reveal its potential use for influence. Axiom 6 (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) states "similarities between persons reduce uncertainty while dissimilarities produce increases in anxiety" (p. 106). The authors include arguments from Festinger (1954) and Berger (1987) cites Albrecht and Adelman (1984) to support this claim. Festinger suggested that individuals in an uncertain situation will seek similiar others. Albrecht and Adelman found when two people are in the same stressful situation their uncertainty reducing interactions will make the event less stressful.

Similarity has long been understood to be a persuasive tool used to influence the actions of beliefs of a target (Brock, 1965; Byrne, 1971; Karlins & Abelson, 1970; Mills & Jellison, 1968 and Rokeach, 1960). Similarity can be used

as a rhetorical component when one attempts to demonstrate, actual or falsified, likeness to the target. For example, similarity can be used rhetorically to reduce uncertainty during a blind date. On this particular initial interaction, Nancy and Ron may both be experiencing anxiety and stress as they meet. Nancy, having heard that Ron is an excellent person, as well as an actor, may have a particular interest in the possibility of an extended relationship. Therefore, although she is not interested in thespain activities, she can pretend to be interested in Ron's career. Similarity in the initial interaction is established, stress is relieved, and Nancy's goal is more likely to be realized.

Social Context

The third element of URT which lends itself to strategic use in social contexts. Berger (1984) cited earlier research (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) which showed the social context may affect the process of uncertainty reduction. Berger stated, "individuals may be intentionally mislead so they do not discover a hidden agenda, or so many potential agendas are rendered possible that persons have a difficult time understanding exactly which one is operating at a given time. Thus, the social context, like communication action, can sometimes be used to raise uncertainty levels" (p. 45).

The importance of relating context to strategy has been previously addressed by Reardon (1981) and Schlenker (1980).

These researchers explain the need to make strategies appropriate for the existing situation. However, social context can also be manipulated and used, as a rhetorical strategy to lower uncertainty and make a target more susceptible to influence. An individual can manipulate the social context of an initial interaction in order to appeal to the target. The manipulator can control the context in order to enhance his presentation of self or to make the target comfortable in the interaction thus, minimizing their defense mechanisms.

If a potential employee is aware that she or he is going to be in a social atmosphere with an employer, the initial interaction can be arranged to appeal to the employer. The job-seeker can plan to be in the company of others who are respected by the potential employer. The job-seeker could even research the target to determine his or her interests and then work these topics into conversation. All of these strategies would alter the social context in order to enhance the potential employer's impression of the hopeful future employee. The employer would also feel more comfortable in the interaction because topics he or she is interested in are being discussed by people he or she knows.

Information-Seeking Strategies

The fourth element of URT which can be considered a rhetorical strategy is information-seeking strategies. Axiom 1 (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) states that as verbal

communication increases uncertainty levels will decrease. Axiom 3 further dictates that high levels of uncertainty will cause increases in information-seeking. These help support Berger's (1979) claim that particular information seeking behaviors are typically employed for the purpose of decreasing uncertainty.

Interactive strategies (Berger, 1979) occure "when actors and observers engage in face-to-face communication" (p. 139). This strategy can be used to gain information about the target and strategically reveal information that would make the target comfortable with the informaiton seeker and more easily persuaded.

First, when the information-seeker receives information about the target he can quickly demonstrate a similarity of interest, desires or experiences thus, reducing uncertainty because of perceived similarity. With the uncertainty level reduced, the target will more easily be persuaded by the information-seeker. Information-seeking becomes a tool to be used by a skillful interrogator to identify and exploit an individual's interests and biases. Berger evidently recognized the possibility of misusing this strategy because he introduced offensive and defensive tactics used to foil informaiton-seeking. However, Berger only considered "falsification" to consist of withholding information and distorting information. He did not consider the possibility of using the target's messages to determine or refine future messages for the ultimate persuasive effect.

Therefore, Berger's offensive and defensive tactics would not necessarily hinder this strategy even if the target could detect the information-seeker's purpose.

Second, interactive information-seeking includes the revealing of information. Burger's Interactive Strategy II: Self Disclosure" admits the exchange of information can be intimate or non-intimate and truthful or not (p. 140). The potential for strategic use of self-disclosure was addressed by Miell (1984). Given the reciprocal nature of self-disclosure, the target can intentionally reveal information realizing that the target will most likely provide similiar information. This will help facilitate uncertainty reduction as desired by the information seeker: the seeker need not reveal truthful information as long as the target does not know the difference. The seeker will have a more malible target and more information to help align his view with those of the target.

The previous section has shown that rhetorical concepts are inherent in URT. Specifically, predicting future behavior, similarity, social context and information-seeking strategies have been shown to have strategic potential when viewed in the realm of uncertainty reduction. Thus far, this paper has discussed concepts from Kenneth Burke which will help show the rhetorical use of URT and identified four components of URT which can be used strategically. The following section will address Sunnafrank's (1986) Predicted Outcome Value (POV). This paper will argue that

POV provides a critical step toward an understanding of how one can use the incentive to maximize relational outcomes to use uncertainty reduction as a rhetorical strategy.

Predicted Outcome Value

Sunnafrank (1986) presented a revised view of URT and suggested that uncertainty reduction may serve the primary purpose of predicting the value of a relationship. Thus, uncertainty reduction is used to determine whether a relationship should develop beyond the initial interaction.

Predicted Outcome Value is couched in several perspectives which claim initial interactions produce outcome values which influence relational development. Sunnafrank cites from communication (Miller & Steinberg, 1975; Roloff, 1981; Sunnafrank & Miller, 1981); social psychology, (Homans, 1961, 1974; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Taylor, 1973); social reinforcement, (Byrne, 1961, 1971; Byrne & Nelson, 1965); and equity, (Adams, 1963; Walster, Berscheid, and Walster, 1973, 1976 Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978).

Sunnafrank (1986) modified and extended the initial work of Berger and Calabrese (1975) to show that the primary concern among strangers, during initial interactions, is to maximize outcomes. This position takes uncertainty reduction into account as a method for measuring the potential value in developing a relationship. The seven axioms, formulated by Berger and Calabrese (1975), were

extended to show the effect of a positive or negative predicted outcome. For example, Axiom 1 (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) states:

> "Given the high levels of uncertainty present at the outset of the entry phase, as amount of verbal communication increases, the level of uncertainty for each interactant in the relationship will decrease. As uncertainty is further reduced, the amount of verbal communication will increase" (p. 101-102).

This is transformed into proposition 1 (Sunnafrank, 1986) which states:

> "During the beginning stage of initial interactions, both the amount of verbal communication and uncertainty reduction increases. Further increases in amount of verbal communication occur when uncertainty reduction results in positive predicted outcome values, whereas decreases in amount of verbal communication follow from negative predicted outcome values" (p. 15).

From these propositions, Sunnafrank generated 15 POV hypotheses. The hypotheses help clarify POV and distinguish it from URT. Nine of the POV hypotheses were found to conflict with URT while 6 were concordant with 6 of Berger and Calabrese's theorems.

The propositions and theorems generated by Sunnafrank (1986) rest on three general views. First "individuals should be more attracted to partners and relationships when

greater predicted outcome values are expected in the relational future" (p. 10). Second, "increasingly positive predicted outcomes will produce more communicative attempts to extend initial interactions and establish future contact: (p. 10). Third, "individuals will attempt to guide conversations toward topics expected to result in the most positive predicted outcomes" (p. 11).

The foundation of POV is significant because it introduces to initial interactions and uncertainty reduction the elements of motive and influence. Predicted outcome value demonstrates that individuals, not only determine to continue or discontinue interactions based on possible reward, but will attempt to control the interation for their own benefit. For example, Axiom 1 (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) and Proposition 1 (Sunnafrank, 1986) both suggest that as verbal communication increases, uncertainty reduction will, likewise, increase. However, as Axiom 1 is presented, verbal communication and uncertainty reduction increase for the mutual benefit of both interactants or the benefit of the relationship. But, Sunnafrank's position allows for one or both interactants to make a decision on the value of the relationship and continue verbal communication and uncertainty reduction only if it is deemed beneficial. The interactants are motivated by potential rewards and influence the relationship by continuing or discontinuing verbal communication.

An extension of the motivation and influence provided by

POV might present the possibility of influenced outcome value (IOV). This notion would suggest that an individual will not only weigh the potential value of a relationship but can also attempt to manipulate or control the initial interaction to produce a desired outcome. The interactant who wishes to produce an IOV would be able to utilize uncertainty reduction as a rhetorical situation described in the previous section.

The rhetorical use of uncertainty reduction would alter the communicative goal in the relationship. Whereas the goal of uncertainty reduction is relational development; the goal of IOV is best described as the Burkean notion of identification or consubstantiality.

The previous section has reviewed Sunnafrank's POV and argued that it presents an initial step toward the rhetorical use of URT. Furthermore, this section suggested that POV could be extended to IOV when one considers the possibility of motivation and influence in determining the value of future interaction. The following section will further the argument that URT can be used strategically. This section will suggest that when one attempts to influence an initial interaction or affect the outcome value, he or she will be engaged in the process of establishing identification with the target.

IDENTIFICATION AS THE GOAL OF IOV

When one uses uncertainty reduction to influence the outcome of a relationship that individuals' relational goal becomes identification with the target. The individual will use concepts and tactics, partially explained by Burkean motives and hierarchy, to help him or her influence the target and interaction outcome as desired.

One who attempts to influence the outcome of an initial interaction will use rhetorical strategies. This interpersonal use of rhetorical strategies is consistent with the Foss et. al. (1985) description of Burkean rhetoric used to help the rhetor "maneuver through life". Furthermore, the goal of inducing cooperation seems a useful view of rhetoric for individuals who would wish to influence another with uncertainty reduction. Rhetorical use of uncertainty reduction, to be successful, would require the rhetor to influence the target in a manner that would allow the relationship to appear on solid ground.

Burke explained that motivation arises from the analysis of a situation and the relevant stimuli. This view of motivation is precisely what happens when one attempts to influence the outcome of an initial interaction. The rhetor is involved in a process of analyzing the situation of the initial encounter and how to manipulate in to fulfill the desired outcome. The rhetor is also able to examine the motivations of a situation to predict the responses of the other. If the rhetor

determines the target's motivation is to learn more about him or her, the rhetor can offer self-disclosure to please the target, reduce uncertainty and establish consubsantiality. This ability will help the rhetor use hierarchy for the purpose of reducing uncertainty.

In an initial interaction, one can identify the motives of a target and more accurately determine where, in the hierarchy, she is or wants to be and where she wants to go. The rhetor can then tailor messages toward gaining the target's acceptance and reducing uncertainty. These messages could address the target at his hierarchical level, make him feel comfortable there or show him that he can climb hierarchies. The mystery inherent in hierarchy can help the rhetor identify with the target without revealing the hidden agenda.

Finally, identification is a useful way to conceptualize the result of using uncertainty reduction to influence an initial interaction outcome. Both people enter the encounter as separate substances. When one is able to convince the target that they have similar goals or enemies uncertainty will be reduced because the two interactants will seem to be as one, consubstantial. The consubstantiality and degree of uncertainty reduction will strengthen if an unconscious identification is reached.

For example, one can use uncertainty reduction to reach identification in a blind date situation. If the date is arranged so Phil is aware of Mario, his date, he may enter

the initial encounter with the motivation to continue the relationship. He would have already determined that the quality of his life would be enhanced with the company of Marlo and that he will attempt to persuade her to share his desire to extend the relationship.

Phil will be engaged in the process of analyzing the situation (dinner, movie, discussion) and predicting the thoughts of Marlo and strategically selecting his own comments. This analysis will allow Phil to determine Marlo's position in society and on certain issues. This information will allow him to tailor comments and nonverbal behavior to most effectively impress Marlo or make her feel comfortable with him. Marlo and Phil will, at this point, have reduced uncertainty and Phil will have approached identification with Marlo. Phil, because of his influence attempts, will also have greatly increased his chances of gaining the desired outcome from the initial interaction.

This paper has provided an extension of uncertainty reduction that has not yet been addressed by scholars in our field. The paper has argued that uncertainty reduction can be used as a rhetorical strategy to influence the outcome of an initial interaction and future interactions. In developing this argument, the paper has revealed rhetorical concepts inherent in URT, suggested that POV provides a step toward rhetorical uncertainty reduction and extended POV to IOV. Finally, the paper suggested that identification is the goal of rhetorical uncertainty reduction.

Refrences

Adams, J.S. (1963). Toward an understanding of inequity. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 67, 442-436.

Altman, I., & Taylor, D.A. (1973). Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Berger, C.W. (1979). Beyond initial interaction: Uncertainty, understanding, and the development of interpersonal relationships. In Howard Giles and Robert N. St Clair (Eds.), Language and social psychology, (pp. 122-144). Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.

Berger, C.R. (1975). Proactive and retroactive attribution processes in interpersonal communications. Human Communicatin Research, 2, 33-50.

Berger, C.R. & Bradac, J.J. (1982). Language and social knowledge: Uncertainty in interpersonal relations. London, WC: Edward Arnold.

Berger, C.W., & Roloff, M.E. (1982). Thinking about friends and lovers. Social cognition and relational trajectories, In Michael Roloff and Charles R. Berger (Eds.), Social cognition and communication, (pp. 155-192). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Berger, C.W. & Calabrese, R.J. (1975). Some explorations in initial interaction and beyond: Toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. Human Communication Research, 1, 99-112.

Blankenship, J., Murphy, E. and M. Rosenwasser. (1974) Pivotal terms in the early works of Kenneth Burke. Philosophy and Rhetoric, 7, 1-24.

Brock, T.C. (1965). Communicator-recipient similarity and intent to persuade as determinants of counterargument production. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 1, 650-654.

Burke, K. (1969). A grammer of motives. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Burke, K. (1966). Language as symbolic action: Essays on life, literature, and method. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Burke, K. (1957). The philosophy of literary form: Studies in symbolic action. New York: Vintage Books.

Burke, K. (1955). A rhetoric of motives. New York: George Braziller.

Byrne, D. (1961). Interpersonal attraction and attitude similarity. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 62, 713-715.

Byrne, D. (1971). The attraction paradigm. New York: Academic Press.

Byrne, D., & Nelson, D. (1965). Attraction as a linear function of proportion of positive reinforcements. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1, 659-663.

Clatterbuck, G.W. (1979). Attributional confidence and uncertainty in initial interaction. Human Communication Research, 5, 147-157.

Donzella, B. (1988, May). A test of the empirical claims of uncertainty reduction theory. Paper presented at the International Communication Association convention, New Orleans, LA.

Festinger, L. A. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes, Human Relations, 7, 117-140.

Foss, S., Foss, K., and Trapp, R. (1985). Contemporary perspectives on rhetoric. Prospect Heights, Ill: Waveland.

Gorham, J. (1988). The relationship between verbal teacher immediacy behavior and student learning. Communication Education, 37, 40-53.

Gudykunst, W.B. (1985). The influence of cultural similarity, type of relationship, and self-monitoring on uncertainty reduction processes. Communication Monographs, 52, 203-207.

Gudykunst, W.B. (1983). Uncertainty reduction and predictability of behavior in low- and high-context cultures: An exploratory study. Communication Quarterly, 31, 49-55.

Gudykunst, W.B., & Nishida, T. (1986). The influence of cultural variability on perceptions of communication behavior associated with relationship terms. Human Communication Research, 13, 147-166.

Homans, G.C. (1974). Social behavior: Its elementary forms (2nd ed.) New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Jablin, F.M. (1987). Organizational entry, assimilation, and exit. In Frederic M. Jablin, Linda L. Putnam, Karlene H. Roberts, & Lyman W. Porter (Eds.), Handbook of organizational communication: An interdisciplinary perspective, (pp. 679-740). Berverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Jablin, F.M. (1984). Assimilating new members into organizations. In Robert N. Bostrom (Ed.), Communication yearbook, 8, (pp. 594-626). Beverly Hills: Sage.

Karlins, M. and Abelson, H.I. (1970). Persuasion: How opinions and attitudes are changed. New York: Springer.

Kellerman, K. (1986). Anticipation of future interaction and information exchange in initial interaction. Human Communication Research, 13, 41-75.

Kelley, H.H. & Thibaut, J. (1978). Interpersonal relations: A theory of interdependence. New York: John Wiley.

Lester, R. (1987). Organizational culture, uncertainty reduction, and the socialization of new organizational members. In Sari Thomas (Ed.) Culture and communication: Methodology, behavior, artifacts, and institutions: Selected proceedings from the fifth International Conference on culture and communication, Temple University, 1983, (pp. 105-113). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Miell, D.E. (1984). Strategic self disclosure. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Lancaster, England. Cited in Knapp,.M.L. and Miller, G.R. (1095). Handbook of interpersonal communication. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Miller, G.R. & Steinberg, M. (1975). Between people. Chicago: Science Research Associates.

Mills, J. & Jellison, J. (1968). Effect on opinion change of similarity between the communicator and the audience he addresses. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 9, 153-156.

Reardon, K.K. (1981). Persuasion: Theory and practice. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Roloff, M.E. (1981). Interpersonal communication: The social exchange appraoch. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Rokeach, M. (1960). The open and closed mind. New York: Basic Books.

Rueckert, W.H. (1982) Kenneth Burke and the drama of human relations. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Schlenker, B.R. (1980). Impression management: The self-concept, social identity, and interpersonal relations. Montery, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Smircich, I., & Calas, L. (1987). Organizational culture: A critical assessment. In Frederic M. Jablin, Linda L. Putnam, Karlene H. Roberts, & Lyman W. Porter (Eds.) Handbook of organizatinal communication: An interdisciplinary perspective, (pp. 228-263). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Spicer-Stanton, A.Q., & Darling, A.L. (1986). Communication in the socialization of preservice teachers. Communication Education, 35, 215-230.

Sunnafrank, M. (1986). Predicted outcome value during initial interactions: A reformulation of uncertainty reduction theory. Human Communication Research, 13, 3-33.

Sunnafrank, M. & Miller, G.R. (1981). The role of initial conversations in determining attraction to similar and dissimilar strangers. Human Communication Research, 8, 16-25.

Thibaut, J.W., & Kelley, H.H. (1959). The social psychology of groups. New York: John Wiley.

Walster, E., Berscheid, E., & Walster, G.W. (1973). New directions in equity research. Journal of personality and social psychology, 25, 151-176.

Walster, E., Walster, G.W., & Berscheid, E. (1978). Equity: Theory and research. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.